

The Great Divide: Inequities in the Charitable Gaming Model

There is no question that the current gaming system provides very different benefits to charitable organizations depending on where they are located within the province. Rural charitable organizations are left working harder for less funds, and RMA is working diligently to show why this

matters and advocate for a model without winners and losers. Part 2 of RMA's ["Losing Bet"](#) series sheds light on the inequities of the charitable gaming model and the effects this has on rural charitable organizations.

Charitable gaming earnings have a direct impact on how and to what extent organizations in different regions pursue different charitable gaming opportunities.



While charitable gaming is usually equated with casinos, there are other, less lucrative opportunities available to organizations as well. This graph shows that a large proportion of rural charitable organizations rely heavily on "other" gaming licenses, including bingos, raffles, and pull tickets. This is largely due to lower casino earnings, longer wait times, and increased travel distances to casino events for rural groups. However, it is important to note that these "other" gaming licenses are far less rewarding for organizations than casinos are, and all require additional volunteer time and capacity. A much heavier reliance on bingo, raffles, and pull tickets suggests that rural

organizations do not receive the type of revenues that they need to be successful from casino events, which urban organizations are less likely to face this issue.

When organizations receive a charitable gaming license, they are placed on a wait list with other organizations in the same region. Since the number of organizations and casinos within regions is not consistent, wait periods vary significantly; some organizations wait upwards of three and a half years, while others wait for less than two years.

Travel costs associated with accessing casinos can also present a barrier or added cost for rural charitable organizations. Volunteer participation at casinos is mandatory and requires a significant time commitment – a commitment that often involves volunteers to travel far distances and stay overnight where the casino is located. These travel costs affect rural charitable organizations disproportionately and chip away at the funds being earned during casino events.

Whether it is the amount of work they put in, the wait between events, or the effort to travel to casinos, the current model is clearly not designed through a rural lens, which has very real impacts on rural community services.

In the coming weeks, the "Losing Bet" series will provide more details about the impacts the charitable gaming model has on access to revenues, and common-sense ways that the system could be improved so that all organizations receive equal benefits for equal work regardless of where they are located.